



101 Providence Mine Road, Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-3202 ♦ FAX (530) 265-3260

Press Release

Files: 1000
1200.4

TO: Hollie Grimaldi-Flores, KNCO
James Ruffalo, KAHN
KVMR, Public Announcements
The Union, Public Announcements
Sierra Sun, Public Announcements
Moonshine Ink, Public Announcements
Pascale Fusshoeller, YubaNet
Gus Thomson, Auburn Journal

FROM: Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Long Awaited Funding Could Be On It's Way

DATE: February 16, 2007

Nevada County's signalization and widening project on State Route 49 near the La Barr Meadows Road intersection was included today on a statewide list of recommended projects to be considered for funding from the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA), a program created as a result of the approval of Proposition 1B by voters in the November 2006 election. The recommended list of projects will be reviewed at a California Transportation Commission (CTC) workshop on February 20th in Sacramento, and final approval of the recommended projects is scheduled for February 28th at the CTC meeting in Irvine.

In creating the list of recommended projects, CTC staff reviewed 149 projects submitted by Caltrans and regional transportation planning agencies, like the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC). The total cost of the 149 projects was over \$11.3 billion, however Proposition 1B has provided \$4.5 billion for projects that relieve congestion and improve connectivity. CTC staff recommended that the State invest nearly \$2.8 billion on 43 projects statewide that are estimated to produce more than 270,000 hours of traveler time savings during peak commute periods.

Criteria for CMIA funding included that projects relieve congestion on a roadway, or provide important connectivity benefits, and be ready for construction by 2011. The project submitted by the Nevada County Transportation Commission documented SR 49 as an important state route relied upon for connectivity. The submission also noted the history of this project and how Nevada County and Caltrans have been working to get funds to improve the SR 49 corridor for nearly twenty years. The first SR 49 improvement project was the widening of the roadway from the Nevada County line at the Bear River, to the Wolf/Combie Road intersection. In 2002 the CTC awarded \$18.1 million to begin

work on the remainder of the corridor. In 2003/04, in recognition of the need to address unacceptable accident rates near La Barr Meadows Road intersection, NCTC and Caltrans requested the \$18.1 million of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding be focused on a signalization and widening project in that vicinity. Due to recent cost escalations in construction materials, the estimated cost of the project is currently at \$40.5 million. These cost increases led NCTC to requested additional funds from the CMIA Program.

CTC approval of the list of projects and an appropriation in the State Budget are necessary before the projects can be funded, so it is possible that the list can be changed up until those actions are completed. Since more than 100 projects were not recommended, many agencies will be trying to get projects into the list.

NCTC Executive Director Daniel Landon expressed the opinion that the selection of the project on SR 49 came about due to a “full court press” that included the following:

- Citizens of Nevada County expressing their concerns over safety issues on the corridor.
- Increased enforcement efforts on SR 49 by the California Highway Patrol.
- Efforts by elected local officials plus focused attention from state legislators to heighten the awareness of the corridor.
- Safety improvements installed by Caltrans.
- Nevada County Transportation Commission’s submission of the project to the CTC.

NCTC Chairman Nate Beason noted, “This shows what can happen when the community focuses on an issue.”

The California Transportation Commission website has a list of all the submitted projects that made the recommended list: http://www.catc.ca.gov/CMIA_Staff_Recommendation.pdf